

# 71 Adult Education Pathways

## Plans & Goals - Consortium Approved

### Executive Summary

The consortium's guiding principles are to: focus on the needs of adult learners within Siskiyou County; work with transparency and inclusion with all stakeholders; embrace collaboration and partnership to leverage resources, achieve better outcomes and have a positive collective impact on our region; explore expansion and innovation in adult education services in the region; and commit to ideas, decisions, and practices that anticipate the future needs for adult learners in our region. The consortium's vision for the 2021-2022 year is to revitalize adult education in all areas of Siskiyou County. Consortium members have been developing and growing programs for adult learner success while remaining sensitive to the diversity of our communities. Although being rural provides different challenges than our Southern California counterparts, we have not seen social injustices as openly as urban areas do. Or, we receive information at a slower rate. However, in the last couple years, social injustices have started becoming more apparent in some areas of our county. Some of our communities are comprised of Hispanic families who have shared they do not want to get involved, nor speak up if racial injustices are happening. We have also seen an influx of Asian families into our community, however, we are not seeing a proportionate amount of children or adult students in our school systems. We are hoping this isn't due to fear. Our county has had a rise in marijuana grows, which has caused tension among law enforcement and people growing marijuana. These tensions have led to protests regarding race and water rights. We have also recently had a large fire (Lava Fire), which threatened the area where the grows are located. Some believe that officials allowed the fire to burn so they would burn the grows. And, others are concerned about the rise in crime since the grows have entered the County. The county is vast and very rural, so it is important to design innovative solutions to services that serve our adult learners and overcome their geographic and access challenges. Luckily, despite the COVID 19 crises, our adult schools were only temporarily hindered and our sites quickly pivoted to distance learning education. It has been a challenge to gain momentum obtaining enrollees for our CTE classes. Another issue that has come from COVID 19 is that our county has an overwhelming amount of jobs and occupations available to the adults in our region as evident through the SiskiyouWorks weekly job list that was adopted from STEP, Inc. Businesses in our community have had to close their doors for multiple days a week or all together due to staff shortages. Businesses are desperate for employees. Adult Education Pathways, and all its partners, will need to provide ample opportunity for learning, skill development, and overall collaborative efforts within local communities and county wide. Our area of focus this year is to building connections with our region's businesses. We have had great success with multiple local business partners and want to continue the training models provided by vendors with an increased number of partners. We believe it is our job to prepare our students for these careers. It will be critically important to collaborate with local employers to find out what their needs are within their organizations. We are not experts in their field, so we need to communicate with them. This goal comes directly from our three-year plan and we have determined that it is one of our most important goals as we enter the new year. We have partnered with SiskiyouWorks again this year to house our Data & Accountability Management and Transitional Services Management. This collaboration is mutually beneficial as we all are working to get adult learners into the workforce. Siskiyou County has some amazing qualities and we want Adult Education Pathways to be able to be a gateway into economic stability, personal and professional growth, and freedom to achieving dreams.

### Regional Planning Overview

As discussed in the executive summary, our consortium is all about assisting in getting adult learners into the regional job market. We will be developing relationships with local industry leaders, continuing our marketing and outreach campaign in order to recruit more adult learners and shifting the assumed definition of adult education ("getting a GED") to a definition that benefits all adult learners within our county ("helping people get jobs, better jobs, or higher wages"). Our county is traditional and can sometimes seem outdated. However, our county has a lot to offer in the areas of forestry, construction and hospitality. It is our responsibility to reach further into the remote areas of our region to help all adult learners. Our three-year plan has a general theme: our geography can be a struggle. Our region is spread out over many miles and is very rural. Some of our cities/towns don't have suitable internet access - or none at all. Physically getting to remote areas in the county can be a challenge during the snowy winter season. Or, roads can be blocked off during our (seemingly never-ending) fire season. It can be difficult to develop common consortium goals when our communities have such different needs. What is needed in one

part of our county, may not be needed in the opposite part of our county. It will be important to share individual ideas/models and communicate concerns with all our consortium members at our monthly consortium meetings. Furthermore, it will be hugely important for each member representative to continue discovering what labor market is within their service area and how we can connect with those organizations to develop programs for our students.

## Meeting Regional Needs

### Regional Need #1

#### Gaps in Service / Regional Needs

Geographical and Access barriers

#### How do you know? What resources did you use to identify these gaps?

Maps, distance between sites and reports from students that geography and transportation were their biggest barrier to participation. Winter snow and icy conditions, as well as landslides and seasonal wildfires, can cause both smaller roads and major highways to become impassable. Severe winter weather can occur from November to April, while wildfire season generally occurs from April to November. Since a large percentage of county residents reside in remote areas of the region, this makes access to services even more challenging than the ongoing geographic barriers within the county. Another barrier includes lack of sufficient broadband internet access for many students.

#### How will you measure effectiveness / progress towards meeting this need?

Effectiveness will be measured primarily on student milestones and outcomes, but also with reports from students on how they learned about our programs and services.

### Regional Need #2

#### Gaps in Service / Regional Needs

Collaborations with regional organizations and agencies around career opportunities

#### How do you know? What resources did you use to identify these gaps?

Outside our consortium, there are a number of agencies and non-profits contributing services to the exact populations that we are targeting for adult learners looking to enter post-secondary education, enter the workforce, or increase their current wages. There is a great deal of disconnect and lack of information sharing between these agencies in government, non-profit and education. We are working to better coordinate these organizations to align services and student information into more effective pathways to employment. Many organizations hear the name "Adult Education Pathways" and believe all we offer is GED preparation. We know this when we are invited to advisory and collaboration meetings and organization leaders tell us that they didn't know that we assist students in discovering their pathway to employment. This is truly unfortunate as there may have been missed opportunities to leverage funds in order to impact our adult learners in the most effective way.

#### How will you measure effectiveness / progress towards meeting this need?

Primarily, we will use referrals from outside partners as a measure of partnership success. Student numbers should increase proportionally to these referrals and we should start to also see an increased number of students move more quickly into career &/or post-secondary opportunities. On a systems level, we can measure partnership collaboration by inviting community organizations to our monthly public consortium meetings and aligning board regional strategies around adult learner occupational and educational success. Long-term, our hope would be that partners begin to see a decline in the number of adults returning to social services and a decline in the number of adults returning to correctional facilities. The overall hope is that Siskiyou County's unemployment rate decreases as a direct impact of Adult Education Pathway's program and services.

### Regional Need #3

#### Gaps in Service / Regional Needs

Pre-apprenticeships

#### How do you know? What resources did you use to identify these gaps?

Currently, Siskiyou County has no registered apprenticeships. In the past, there was effort from our community college partner to establish these apprenticeships and they are working with local industry groups to design apprenticeships in the areas of: advanced manufacturing, small business and entrepreneurship and media/digital arts. We have approved non-credit pre-apprenticeship curriculum, but have not been able to move students through because there is no established apprenticeship program for them to transition into.

**How will you measure effectiveness / progress towards meeting this need?**

We will continue to work with our community college in developing a pre-apprenticeship program. As new funding comes into the community with the intent to get county residents jobs, there may be potential for the college to connect with an established apprenticeship. SiskiyouWorks, Siskiyou County's Workforce Development Plan, is on a mission to help develop pathways to employment for all Siskiyou County's population. Contracting with them for our transitional services will help us to discover where apprenticeships are and then we can be a huge support.

**Regional Need #4**

**Gaps in Service / Regional Needs**

Programs for adults with disabilities

**How do you know? What resources did you use to identify these gaps?**

Our TOPSpro data for the last 7 years has shown that we are not serving more than 5 disabled students per year at any of our sites. The US Census Bureau data indicates that for the years 2013 - 2017, 14.1% of Siskiyou County residents possessed a disability.

**How will you measure effectiveness / progress towards meeting this need?**

Reports from TOPSpro showing increased number of enrollments for students who possess a disability. Also, connecting with our college partner's DSPS Director on ways to assist students will be hugely important.

**Gaps In Service**

**New Strategies**

**Strategy #1**

Continue to develop online, distance learning, expanding to nights, weekends, and summers to accommodate non-traditional work schedules. Enhance linkage transition coordination services, pathways to post-secondary education, and employment and training assistance. Continue coordinating consortium-wide activities and timely relay of information.

**Strategy #2**

Collaboration with regional community organizations to coordinate communications, build a better referral system, identify challenges and strategize for program expansion that supports existing and new students. Work around data sharing barriers and lack of awareness or understanding about Adult Education Pathway's services. Continue our marketing and outreach strategy that targets specific populations in our region. In the marketing and outreach strategy, we will to analyze and research what media platforms will work best for who we are targeting.

**Strategy #3**

Continue to expand course options and curriculum, particularly around CTE and exploring pre-apprenticeship opportunities, with the possibility of working with already established apprenticeship programs to see if bringing them to Siskiyou County would be mutually beneficial. Transition students from short-term CTE programs into technical programs at the college. Convene industry groups around soft skills needs and offer workforce skills training and certificates to students.

**Strategy #4**

We will make connections with local agencies who work with individuals with disabilities, such as, The Siskiyou Opportunity Center, Southern Oregon Goodwill, Compass, and Northern Valley Catholic Social Service. Our strategy would be to provide these individuals with occupational skills and certificates to get hired within our local community

## Seamless Transitions

### New Strategies

#### Strategy #1

We had centralized the transition coordination services to our WIOA Title I (Siskiyou Training & Employment Program, Inc. - STEP) member. Unfortunately, STEP had to leave the consortium, as their parent agency decided to consolidate counties. When this happened, SiskiyouWorks hired two of STEP's employees. We are now contracting with SiskiyouWorks for Data & Accountability Services as well as Transitional Services. These positions are now 2 full time positions. They will support all 6 K-12 adult school sites and college partner with their data and transitional services. Students will receive an initial pre-screening interview with the transitional services coordinator, which includes completing intake and registration, gathering transcripts, goal setting, career advising and generating referrals to their local adult school or consortium site's training program.

#### Strategy #2

Setting new non-credit and certificate programs in place that address specific pathways into employment for our region. Also, non-credit classes focusing on soft skills.

#### Strategy #3

We are working to achieve 100% pre and post-test assessment each year for new student enrollment. However, due to the COVID-19 crises, we are also focusing on other ways to achieve outcomes in case we still don't have the capacity to test. We are still learning about remote testing as information comes available in case we decide to try it.

#### Strategy #4

We are looking to document and share success stories. Word of mouth about our programs has proven to increase new participants. We have created quarterly newsletter for community partners and it was so well received that the community asked us to complete additional newsletters. At present, our newsletter comes out every other month.

#### Strategy #5

Ensure our common diploma aligns with course pathways.

## Student Acceleration

### New Strategies

#### Strategy #1

Our Dunsmuir site has been extremely successful in developing a vendor-type model of partnership for training programs. These sites have leveraged resources and funds in order to develop job trainings that gives adult participants the opportunity to obtain employment at the end of the training program through direct hiring. Finding other opportunities to utilize this model across sites and industries has started and will continue.

#### Strategy #2

Our community college has developed certificate pathways that move students from non-credit to either short-term CTE or to credit classes. Our college needs to implement these pathways and certificates. We are also hoping to align our short term CTE offered at the K-12 level into creating a pathway to the community college

#### Strategy #3

We also have students complete a "job preparation capstone project" as a diploma requirement, which helps them plan for career or continued education while completing HSE.

## Professional Development

### New Strategies

#### Strategy #1

Better connect with TAP and the CAEP office and have more members participate in webinars offered by CAEP and CASAS. The director and other CAEP personnel throughout the region will be participating in multiple CAEP and personal development conferences and state events.

#### Strategy #2

Coordinate with WIOA and local workforce partners to share best practices and joint training opportunities regarding the alignment of CAEP and WIOA performance-based measurements.

#### Strategy #3

Offer internal training to member schools and partners on subscriptions we currently utilize like: ACT WorkKeys, GED Academy, Newslea, TOPSpro Enterprise, AERIES, LACES, CASAS assessments and Google Toolkit.

#### Strategy #4

Develop metrics on member effectiveness so all members can be pursuing the same goals and standards in regards to milestones and outcomes. Document notifications and interventions for each member when measuring member effectiveness against CAEP assurances. The director is implementing a warning system in order to document interventions in the event that there is member ineffectiveness and funds at that site needs to be reduced.

## Leveraging Resources

### New Strategies

#### Strategy #1

We have been extremely successful with partnering with two local organizations - the ski park and a forestry company. Our Dunsmuir and STEP, Inc. site collaborated and partnered with these agencies and were able to give adult learners the opportunity to enter employment upon completion of training programs. These sites used the partners as a vendor and it was fiscally effective, as well as, students reached almost 100% outcomes. This model will be shared with other consortium members at our annual retreat. We will have other sites adopt this model to continue such successes in their own service area. We will also be working on connecting with other industries (web design for local businesses via the Economic Development Council) to develop this model.

#### Strategy #2

Through partnerships with local agencies, such as, First 5 Siskiyou, the Family Resource Center network, and Health and Human Services, we are integrating Adult Education Pathways materials and outreach into the hands of adult learners who may not have known about our services. We will continue making posts on Facebook, Twitter, and sending out a quarterly newsletter to make sure we have the biggest impact on our community in the most frugal way possible.

#### Strategy #3

Through a partnership with the local Sheriff's office, Probation and Day Reporting Center, we will be offering adult education classes to adult learners involved in the criminal justice system. GED preparation services as well as non-credit classes will be offered.

## Fiscal Management

**A narrative justifying how the planned allocations are consistent with the annual adult education plan which is based on your CAEP 3-year plan.**

Our budgetary structure aligns well with our annual and 3-year plan that gives each voting member an internal budget to provide core adult educational services, as well as, a customized set of specialized services depending on their individual capabilities and the needs of their community. It also allows some flexibility to pursue systemic program improvements each year and pursue closer partnerships where funding can make possible new collaborative programs within the local community. Siskiyou County Office of Education has earmarked part of their CAEP allocation for shared consortium expenses such as Curriculum Coordinator, Transitional Services and Data & Accountability Services. Centralizing these services to be a shared consortium expense has freed up each site to focus completely on improving and growing their internal programs.

**An approach to incorporating remaining carry-over funds from prior year(s) into strategies planned for 2021-22.**

We are starting off the 2021-2022 year developing strong metrics for member effectiveness. In general, members who are proving to have high enrollment, high persistence, and a high number of outcomes will be given the opportunity to be reallocated more funds from sites with significant carryover. Those members who have carryover within their own internal budget will be required to use up their carryover without the option of receiving a portion of the reallocated funds. These sites will coordinate with the director and receive guidance from other consortium members to develop programs or services that will directly impact adult learners within their community. The warning system that has been developed to notify members of non-compliance will create backup or documentation of interventions should we need to reallocate funds due to ineffectiveness.

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